



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

EXECUTIVE ORDER
NO. 2020-022

December 1, 2020

DECLARING RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS

WHEREAS, racism is defined “as a system of structuring opportunity and assigning value based on the social interpretation of how one looks (which is what we call “race”), that unfairly disadvantages some individuals and communities, unfairly advantages other individuals and communities, and saps the strength of the whole society through the waste of human resources.”¹; and

WHEREAS, racism can be seen across systemic, institutional and interpersonal levels – over the course of time and across generations -- causing sanctioned and actual discrimination against people of color, and have created racial inequities in all facets of life in the United States and here in Louisville, Kentucky, and these racial inequities continue to the present day; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 pandemic crisis and the current protests surrounding racial injustice have helped to highlight more than ever that racism causes disproportionately higher rates of health inequities and disparities, mortality, incarceration, and voting and economic hardships, especially for Black Americans; and

WHEREAS, the Black poverty rate in Louisville is 29.8%, nearly 3 times the White poverty rate of 10.2%; the median Black family in Louisville earns \$35,870 a year vs. \$61,977 a year for the median White family; 2.4% of businesses are owned by Black Louisvillians (while making up 23% of the total population in Metro); the average Black college graduate in Louisville earns almost \$10,000 less a year than the average White college graduate; and 73% of White residents in Louisville own their own homes vs. 36% of Black residents;² and

¹ Definition by Dr. Camara Jones

² See U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2018: ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Demographic Characteristics for Occupied Housing Units [S2502]. Retrieved from: https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?tid=ACSST1Y2018.S2502&vintage=2018&hidePreview=true&layer=VT_2018_040_00_PY_D1&cid=S2301_C01_001E&t=Housing&g=310M400US31140_0100000US, June 3, 2020 AND U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2018: ACS 1-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Median Income in the Past 12 Months [S1903]. Retrieved from:

WHEREAS, the killings of Michael Brown, George Floyd, Ahmad Arbury, Oscar Grant, Tamir Rice, and Breonna Taylor, among many others, and the protests that followed have brought sustained national attention on the need to reimagine public safety and reform the police department; and

WHEREAS, Louisville Metro Government has in the past taken a number of actions and developed a number of policies, practices and positions to address racism, racist systems and racial inequities that include: the creation of the Office of Equity and the creation of a Chief Equity Officer position, the equity review of the land use code and other Louisville Metro operating policies, over one billion dollars of investment in west Louisville, and other specific investments in communities of color that have been historically excluded and marginalized; and

WHEREAS, despite the significant efforts at addressing racism, racist systems and racial inequities in the Louisville Metro community, there remains a tremendous gap in the privileges and opportunities that other individuals experience, as well as a lack of full understanding of how racism impacts people of color in America – especially Black residents; and


WHEREAS, Louisville Metro Government must commit to transformative equity by providing resources, and monetary capital, which are necessary and must be significantly increased, as well as an enterprise-wide redesign of policies, practices, and budgets that provide tangible outcomes and impact and address racial inequities and the crisis that is racism, and must utilize any and all efforts necessary at creating an environment of anti-racism; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Greg Fischer, as Mayor of the Louisville/Jefferson County Metro Government, HEREBY DECLARE RACISM AS A PUBLIC HEALTH CRISIS IN LOUISVILLE METRO, and I hereby commit efforts and unwavering support to improving the quality of life and health of our minority residents. To that end, I hereby ORDER AND DIRECT THE FOLLOWING:

1. THAT, Louisville Metro Government take the following steps to dismantle systemic racism:
 - a. Reimagine public safety by working with the community and Louisville Metro Police Department on reform so that every Louisvillian feels safe and secure in every corner of Louisville, and police are community-oriented, accountable, transparent guardians.
 - b. Support children and families through Evolve502 by providing every child with wrap-around personal supports and a college scholarship to Jefferson Community

Technical College or Simmons College, with an emphasis on Black and low-income Louisvillians.

- c. Increase Black employment in the jobs of Louisville's future by investing in tech training, the Future of Work initiative and SummerWorks. Address the Black pay gap and lack of Black talent in professional/ managerial/ technical jobs and ensure Metro Government employment reflects the city's demographics.
 - d. Build Black wealth by increasing and supporting Black-owned businesses through financing, technical assistance, and business networking; increasing Black home ownership through down payment assistance, financing, and other supports; promote an increase in the minimum wage, and advocate for Congressional action on reparations.
 - e. Invest in affordable housing throughout all areas of Louisville Metro and restore disinvested neighborhoods through eviction prevention, homeownership programs, and anti-displacement initiatives to support current homeowners. Louisville Metro will maintain its commitment to affirmatively furthering fair housing by continuing to identify and eliminate barriers to housing choice, and by taking meaningful actions to overcome patterns of exclusion and fostering inclusive communities.
 - f. Address the health impacts of racism and the significant inequities that have once again been highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Metro will examine the need for increased trauma resilient care through understanding, anticipating, and responding to the impact that racial trauma can have, and will stress the importance of equitable access to mental health treatments in response to these historical traumas.
 - g. Work to eliminate barriers to voting and enhance voter participation activities, including advocating for the restoration of voting rights and supporting universal early voting efforts.
2. THAT, Louisville Metro Government commits to promoting racial equity and social justice through all policies that are drafted and approved at all levels of Metro government, and educating and training Metro employees, staff, and elected and non-elected officials, on how racism and other systems of oppression can affect health, the delivery of human and social services, economic development, public safety and all other aspects of society.
3. THAT, Louisville Metro Government commits to collaborating with local partners to search for more ways to counter systemic injustices by supporting community efforts to amplify issues of racism, by engaging actively with communities of color throughout Metro, and by solidifying alliances and partnerships with other anti-racism organizations.

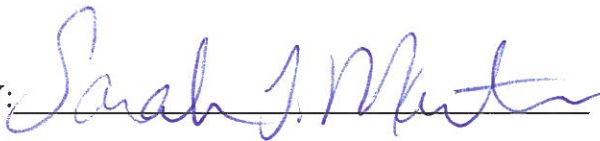


GREG FISCHER
MAYOR

DATE: 12/1/2020

APPROVED FOR FORM & LEGALITY
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BY:



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